

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claim 34 is pending in the current application. In view of the following remarks, applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application.

II. Rejection of Claim 34 Under 35 U.S.C. 112, Second Paragraph

Claim 34 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The Office Action states that the language of “wherein the screen assembly at at least two outer edges is formed into planar side planes extending parallel to a plane defined by respective first and second flanges” renders the claim indefinite. The Office Action states that it is unclear how the screen assembly can be parallel to itself. Additionally, the Office Action states that it is unclear as to what plane is defined by the flanges and therefore it is unclear what planes are parallel to that plane.

Applicants have amended claim 34 to describe the individual components as well as their relationship to other recited components. Applicants have addressed the rejection to claim 34 through this amendment, wherein the feature of the plane has been deleted. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the amendment to claim 34.

II. Rejection of Claim 34 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claim 34 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,332,101 (“Bakula”).

Claim 34 relates to a vibratory screen assembly comprising a plate, first and second side edge portions on said plate, first and second series of finger-receiving apertures in said first and second side edge portions, respectively, first and second plate flanges on said plate located outwardly of said first and second series of apertures, the first and second plate flanges extending approximately perpendicular to a remainder of the plate, respectively, a screen sub-assembly on said plate, and first and second portions of said screen sub-assembly spaced from and overlying said first and second finger-receiving apertures, respectively, and secured between

said plate and said first and second plate flanges, respectively wherein the screen sub-assembly further comprises at least two outer edges is formed into planar side planes extending parallel to the respective first and second plate flanges and contacting the respective first and second plate flanges. Support for the amendments to claim 34 are found, for example, on page 11, lines 1 to 21 and Figure 3.

Bakula relates to a screen aligning, tensioning and sealing structure for vibratory screening machines. Bakula provides a screen 22 which is supported by a apertured steel plate 27. As provided in Figure 12, an alignment structure consisting of notches 24 and 24' are provided in channels 25 and 25'. As provided in the accompanying description and figures of Bakula, the channels 25 and 25' are placed overtop of any screen assembly. As a result, Bakula does not disclose or even suggest any configuration provided in amended claim 34 which provides for plate flanges. Moreover, Bakula does not disclose or suggest any configuration wherein the first and second plate flanges extend approximately perpendicular to a remainder of the plate.

Bakula, rather, presents a configuration which has channels 25 that are positioned along the edges of the screen. The channels 25 do not form a plane upon which at least two outer edges of the screen extend in a parallel configuration. Applicants respectfully submit that as Bakula fails to disclose or suggest the features provided in amended claim 34, that claim 34 is patentable for the reasons presented above. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections to claim 34.

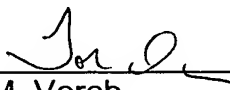
III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims of the present application are now in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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